

I have been a longtime proponent of Speech to Speech (“STS”) that allows individuals with speech disabilities to communicate via the telephone. People with speech disabilities should benefit from advances in technology including the internet. Until now, individuals have had to rely upon an operator to translate their verbal cues. Consumers of STS would be able to better communicate if verbal cues were combined with facial cues, which the VID-STS technology would allow. It is my understanding that the VID-STS Petition for Rulemaking 10-20-2011 is supported by many potential users, their family members, allied medical professionals, and industry representatives. VID-STS can potentially lead to employment for many users because telephone access is generally a prerequisite for obtaining employment and carrying out job tasks. VID-STS would also provide potential users with access to emergency services that are not otherwise currently available to them.

I commend the FCC on its continued efforts to improve the quality of life for individuals with speech disabilities by attempting to ensure that they have equal access to telecommunications relay services on a functionally equivalent level as other Americans do.

respectfully submitted,

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